

# The Spiritualist.

A RECORD OF THE PROGRESS OF THE SCIENCE AND ETHICS OF SPIRITUALISM.

[REGISTERED FOR TRANSMISSION ABROAD.]

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**A DESIRE** for investigation being felt by many on hearing of the phenomena of Spiritualism, several residents in Dalston and its neighbourhood thought that if an Association were formed, and investigation instituted, the alleged facts of Spiritualism, if true, might be demonstrated. Accordingly, a preliminary Meeting was called and this Association formed on the 15th September, 1870.

Its purposes are the collection of facts, through its own circle, or circles, so as to form a perfect basis for honest opinion, and by various means to induce others to give the matter careful enquiry, before judging of the manifestations of modern Spiritualism.

Ordinary experimental *seances* are held weekly, on Thursday evenings, at 8 p.m., to which Members are admitted, as well as Members of similar Associations (*vide* Rule IX). Strangers can only be admitted to the *ordinary seance* held on the first Thursday evening in each month, on introduction by a Member. The last Thursday evening in each month is devoted to *special seances* with professional media, lectures, discussions, reading of papers, or narration of experiences of investigators; to which strangers are admitted, under the same regulations as are enforced on the first Thursday evening in each month.

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**VERY** soon after the introduction of Modern Spiritualism into England the subject attracted attention in Clerkenwell and neighbourhood, where several circles were formed, some of which were continued for a long number of years, and the great and increasing pressure from strangers for admission thereto led, in May, 1869, to the formation of this Association.

It seeks as its main object to assist, by various means, any person desirous to obtain information respecting Spiritualism, or to commence the investigation of its facts; but, whilst Members unite for this purpose, they have opportunities of improving their own knowledge of its teachings and varied phenomena, of becoming acquainted with the experience and opinions of others, and with the general literature of the movement.

Free public Services are held on Sunday evenings at Goswell Hall, 86, Goswell-road, and other meetings (of which announcement is duly made) are held on Thursday evenings; the latter meetings consist of *seances*, conferences, narrations of experience, the reading of papers, &c. Strangers are admitted on Thursday evenings on the introduction of a Member. Social gatherings are occasionally held for bringing Members and friends into closer acquaintance with one another. The Library is for the use of Members only.

Further information may be obtained from the Officers of the Association at the meetings, or by letter addressed to the Secretary at the Committee Rooms, 30, Parkfield-street, Islington.

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**THE** object of this Association is the discovery of truth in connection with Psychology.

The Society seeks to attain its object by the following measures, or such of them as from time to time are found to be practicable.

- 1.—By frequent meetings of its members for conference, inquiry, instruction, mental improvement, spiritual culture, social intercourse, and healthful recreation.
- 2.—By engaging in the education of children and others, for the purpose of developing their physical, mental, and spiritual powers.
- 3.—By the dissemination of knowledge by means of public instruction, lectures, reading-rooms, the press, and spirit communion.

## THE MANCHESTER ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.

**A MEETING** of the active members and friends of this Association was held on Sunday, the 26th day of October, 1873, to take into consideration the best means to adopt for the consolidation of the society. A provisional committee was appointed, from which a sub-committee was chosen, to draw up a prospectus.

*The Objects of this Association are:—*

1. Mutual aid on the part of its members in the discovery of all truth relating to man's spiritual nature, capacities, duties, welfare, destiny, its application to a regenerate life, also to assist enquirers in the investigation of the facts of Spiritualism.
2. To spread a knowledge of the truths connected with the facts, chiefly the truth of the reality of a future state of progressive existence for all.

As soon as a sufficient number of members is enrolled, a meeting will be called, at which a permanent committee will be elected for the management of the society.

The provisional committee earnestly solicit the co-operation of all who desire the spread of the true and ennobling principles of Spiritualism.

The public meetings of this association are held, *pro tem.*, at the Temperance Hall, Grosvenor-street, every Sunday afternoon, at 2.30, except when other arrangements are made, of which due notice will be given.

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## SPIRIT TEACHINGS.\*

## No. III.

*Question as to a headache which resulted from the previous communication.*

Your headache was the result of the intensity of the power, and the rapidity with which it was withdrawn from you. We could not write on such a subject [War and the treatment of criminals] without displaying eagerness: for it is the most vital one that can concern those to whom we are sent. We would fain impress on you the paramount importance of obeying even those unalterable laws, which God has laid down for you, and which you violate at your own peril.

Wars are but the product of your lust for gain, your ambition, your angry, proud, vengeful passions. And what is the product? God's fair works destroyed and trampled underfoot: the lovely and peaceful results of man's industry destroyed: the holy ties of home and kindred severed: thousands of families plunged into distress: rivers of blood shed wantonly: souls unnumbered rent from their earth-body to rush unprepared, uneducated, unpurified into the spheres. Bad, all bad! earthy, evil sprung from earth, and resulting in misery. Till you know better than this, your race will progress but slowly, for you are perpetually sowing seed which produces a crop of obstacles to our work.

Much there is in social knowledge, and in the conduct of State affairs, that you must un-learn: much that is to be added to your knowledge.

For instance, ye legislate for the masses, but ye deal not with the offender. Your legislation must be punitive, but it should be remedial too. Those whom ye think insane ye shut up fast, lest they should injure others. A few years ago, and ye tortured them, and filled your mad-houses with many whose only crime it was to differ from the foolish notions of their fellows, or to be—as many were, and are whom ye have thought mad—recipients of undeveloped spirit influence. This ye will one day know to your sorrow—that to leave the beaten track is not always evidence of a wandering mind; and to be the vehicle of spirit-teaching is not proof of a mind unhinged. From many the power of proclaiming their mission has been taken away, and it has been falsely said that we have filled the asylums and driven our mediums to madness, because blind and ignorant men have chosen to attribute insanity to all who have ventured to proclaim their connection with us and our teaching. They have decided, forsooth, that to be in communion with the spheres is evidence of madness; therefore all who claim so to be are mad, and consequently must be shut up within the madhouse. And because by lying statements they have succeeded in affixing the stigma, and in incarcerating the medium,

they further charge on us the sin they have invented of driving our mediums to madness.

Were it not ignorance it would be blasphemy. We have brought nought but blessing to our friends. We are to them the bearers of Divine inspiration. If man has chosen to attract by his evil mind and evil life congenial spirits who aggravate his wickedness, on his head be the sin. They have but tended the crop which he has already sown. He was mad already; mad in neglect of his own spirit and body; mad in that he has driven far from him the holy influences. But we deal not with such. Far more mad indeed are those besotted drunkards whom ye deem not mad. To spirit-eye there is no more fearful sight than those dens of wickedness and impurity where the evil men gather to steep their senses in oblivion, to excite the lustful and sensual passions of their debased bodies, to consort with the degraded and the impure, and to offer themselves the ready prey of the basest and worst spirits who hover around and find their gratification in living over again their bodily lives. These are dens of basest, most hideous degradation; a blot on your civilisation, a disgrace to your intelligence.

*What do you mean by living over again their base lives?*

These earth-bound spirits retain much of their earthly passion and propensity. The cravings of the body are not extinct, though the power to gratify them is withdrawn. The drunkard retains his old thirst, but exaggerated; aggravated by the impossibility of slaking it. It burns within him the unquenched desire, and urges him to frequent the haunts of his old vices, and to drive wretches like himself to further degradation. In them he lives again his old life, and drinks in satisfaction, grim and devilish, from the excesses which he causes them to commit. And so his vice perpetuates itself and swells the crop of sin and sorrow. The besotted wretch, goaded on by agencies he cannot see, sinks deeper and deeper into the mire. His innocent wife and babe starve and weep in silent agony, and near them hovers and over them broods the guardian angel who has no power to reach the sodden wretch who mars their lives and breaks their hearts.

This we shadow forth to you when we tell you that the earth-bound spirit lives again its life of excess in the excesses of those whom it is enabled to drive to ruin. The remedy is slow, for such vices perpetuate themselves. It can only be found in the moral and material elevation of the race; in the gradual growth of purer and truer knowledge; in advanced education in its widest and truest sense.

*Do children pass at once to a high sphere?*

No: the experience of the earth-life cannot so be dispensed with. The absence of contamination ensures a rapid passage through the spheres of purification, but the absence of experience and knowledge requires to be remedied by training and education, by spirits whose special care it is to train these tender souls, and supply to them that which they have missed. It is not a gain to be removed from earth-life, save in one way—that misuse of opportunities might have entailed greater loss and have more retarded progress. The soul that gains most is the soul that keeps ever before it the work which has been allotted to it, which has laboured zealously for its own improvement and the benefit of its fellows, which has loved and served God, and has followed the guidance of its guardians. This is the soul which has least to unlearn, and which rises in the

\* In the *Spiritualist* of August 15th, an account was printed of some remarkable seances held at the house of Mr. Stanhope T. Speer, M.D., Douglas-house, Alexandra-road, St. John's-wood, through the mediumship of a gentleman in private life who does not wish his name to be published. It will be remembered that most of the spirits gave their names and proved their identity; also the extracts they gave from their writings were found, after laborious search in the British Museum Library and elsewhere, to be true. Hence there is evidence that spirits can give teachings through this medium, free, to a large extent at all events, from colour from his own thoughts; consequently, the "spirit teachings" printed above, obtained through his mediumship, may be assumed to be to a considerable extent reliable. It is proper to state that these communications are selected in chronological order from a mass which has been given continuously for the past six months. Many of the originals are of such a personal nature that they are necessarily omitted, otherwise no change is made. The communicating spirits are many: each gives his name and details of his earth-life very fully. These facts, in all cases unknown to the medium previously, have been invariably found to be correct in every particular. The handwriting, peculiar to the communicating intelligence, is always preserved, and the individuality remains throughout the same.—Ed.

spheres. All vanity and selfishness in every form, all sluggishness and indolence, all self-indulgence mars progress. We say nought of open vice and sin, nor of obstinate refusal to learn and to be taught. Love and knowledge help on the soul. The child may have the one qualification; it cannot have the other save by education, which is frequently gained by its being attached to a medium, and living over the earth-life again. But many a child-spirit leaves the earth-life pure and unsullied who would have been exposed to temptation and grievous trial; and so it gains in purity what it has lost in knowledge. The spirit who has fought and won is the nobler one. Purified by trial, it rises to the sphere set apart for the proven souls. Such experience is essential; and for the purpose of gaining it many spirits elect to return to earth, and, by attaching themselves to a medium, gain the special phase of experience which they need. To one it is the cultivation of the affections that is necessary; to another the experience of suffering and sorrow; to another mental culture; to another the curbing and restraining of the impulses of the spirit, control, even balance. All who return, save those who, like ourselves, are charged with a mission, have an object to gain: and in being associated with us and with you they gain their progress.

This is the one desire of spirit. More progress! More knowledge! More love! till the dross is purged away, and the soul soars higher and yet higher towards the Supreme.

#### CERTAIN PROBLEMS CONNECTED WITH MEDIUMSHIP.\*

BY WILLIAM H. HARRISON.

WHEN it became necessary to select a subject to bring under your notice this evening, I asked your honorary secretary to select one of two. The one was, "Certain Problems connected with Mediumship" and the other, "My Early experiences in connection with Spiritualism." Mr. Blyton chose the former of these two subjects, so I accordingly have the honour of bringing it before you to-night.

TO WHAT EXTENT ARE VERY SENSITIVE MEDIUMS MORALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR ACTS?

The phenomena of mesmerism are so closely allied to many of those of Spiritualism, that the study of the one subject throws a considerable amount of light upon the other. In fact, a great want at the present time is a full and accurate knowledge of mesmerism; but, in consequence of the scientific world having for two generations tabooed that subject, its literature is scanty and its laws comparatively unknown. The phenomena have not been studied so closely and continuously as those connected with other sciences, and the progress of human knowledge in this direction has been kept back by the prejudices of men who ought to have guided public opinion without let or hindrance, in whatever direction they might have been led by the truths of nature.

"Better late than never" is an old adage; so Spiritualists, and especially spiritual societies, should now give every encouragement to mesmerism and mesmeric lecturers, to gain, by observation and experiment, practical knowledge of the subject, to accurately systematise the facts, and to discover the principles underlying them.

The first and chief problem which I desire to submit for your consideration this evening is the question—To what extent are mediums responsible for many of their acts, they being so frequently under the control of stronger wills than their own? A few words about the relationship of mesmerism and Spiritualism will help to make my meaning clear.

In mesmeric lectures it is a common thing for the "biologist," as he calls himself, to send persons to sleep by means of a few passes; the subjects also often pass into the same condition by merely gazing steadfastly on something held in the hand, whilst under the impression that a strange and mysterious power is acting upon them. These sensitives are afterwards discovered to be subject to the control of the will of the mesmeriser, and they act under his orders as if in a dream. He informs them that they are freezing, and they shiver as if they were surrounded by the eternal snows of the polar regions. He informs them that the floor is red-hot, and they dance upon it as if it burnt them, or they mount upon chairs to escape from the effects of the imaginary heat. He tells them that pigeons are flying overhead, consequently some of the sensitives whistle, others point imaginary guns at the birds, and the scene conjured up by his will is evidently real to them. Once I saw some rough, uncultured men thus under the control of Mr. Sheldon Chadwick in the school-rooms opposite Abney-park Cemetery, and he told them that friends of theirs in the immortal world were returning to visit them. Tears streamed down their faces, a sublime expression came over the countenances of many, and the scene was one of the strangest I ever witnessed.

The public at large are too fond of ridiculing that which they do not understand; and this tone of mind is reflected in the more popular newspapers: consequently, for many years all phenomena of a psychological nature have been treated by them as imposture, although the facts have now so multiplied in all directions, and are so common in the homes of private families, that that stage of public opinion as regards mesmerism is becoming a thing of the past.

When totally ignorant of the subject of mesmerism, I wished to know whether there was any truth in it or not. Instead of reading newspapers, or listening to mesmeric lecturers, of whose integrity I should know nothing, I asked a gentleman who is present with us this evening to allow me to make a few mesmeric passes over him, in the endeavour to find out whether there was any truth in the subject. He consented, and in less than five minutes he was sound asleep, very much to my astonishment, for I sat down on a chair opposite him, and hoped that it was all right, and that he would wake up again, otherwise the consequences would have been awkward. Thus, in all cases of doubt, a practical experiment at home, in the midst of friends, is of more use in producing conviction than listening for months to any amount of argument. One point in which mesmeric and spiritual phenomena are allied is exemplified in the circumstance that a mesmeric lecturer can find certain sensitives who will speak any words he pleases in obedience to the silent exercise of the will. Spirits out of the earthly body probably control trance mediums in the body in the same way.

One day, at a *seance* at Mrs. Kislingsbury's, I was asked to mesmerise a medium who is now present, after which I found that every sentence I uttered was re-

\* A paper read Thursday, last week, before the Dalston Association of Enquirers into Spiritualism.

peated by the sensitive. Next, I formed some sentences in my own mind, and willed that she should speak them, but no result followed; it was necessary for me to utter the words aloud.

The journal of the French *Société Médico-Psychologique* for April, 1857, narrates how M. Lunier mesmerised a young girl aged fourteen, of the name of Lise, and he testified that several times he dictated to her mentally a word or sentence which she wrote down, as if she had heard it spoken. Thus M. Lunier obtained results a step in advance of my own.

Mr. J. M. Peebles told me that once he controlled a medium, and by will made him speak whatever he wished. I forgot to ask Mr. Peebles whether it was necessary for him to utter his words aloud, and if any public report of these remarks should reach his eye in America, perhaps he will make known the full details of the case.

There are several friends here to-night who have seen messages given through the hand of a writing medium, which messages were willed by a friend standing near, whose finger at the time simply touched the wrist of the medium. The words thus willed were written at once by the hand of the medium with considerable velocity, and further experiments on this point might be of very considerable value. Spirits say they often have much difficulty in giving proper names through mediums. Could names of persons not known to the medium just mentioned, be written as easily as the other thoughts of the person touching her wrist?

In all the preceding cases a mesmerist, who is but a spirit encased in a mortal body, controlled another person to say what he wished. If it be assumed, as it is but reasonable to do, that a spirit out of the body can do the same thing and make a medium in the body speak what she or he wishes, a distinct connection is established between the phenomena of mesmerism and those of Spiritualism. Moreover, a field is opened for experiment, which is a very important point, considering that in Spiritualism so many of the phenomena appear to be entirely beyond the domain of experiment. The preceding remarks have laid a foundation for the utterance of the first problem, which I respectfully submit to the consideration of this society to-night. If spirits out of the body can get their sensitives so completely under control, as in the cases of human mesmerism already mentioned, to what extent are mediums responsible for their acts? For instance, if a mesmerist wills that a subject under his control shall, as the Scotchman said, "Go out into the middle of the street and swear at large," who is responsible for the act? Is the mesmerist responsible, or the person helplessly under his control?

If this point be admitted it does not wholly clear up the question of the moral responsibility of mediums. There are times when mediums are said to be in their normal state, but even then there is evidence that spirits can stimulate their thoughts or their passions, so as to exercise more or less influence over their acts. I have known very sensitive mediums to be made suddenly to utter sentences not their own, whilst in the midst of ordinary conversation. I also remember an instance in which a lady sat for two hours in her own drawing room carrying on a conversation with the rest of the company, and it was accidentally discovered several days afterwards that she was in a trance at the time, and knew nothing whatever of the circumstances or of the conversation; therefore, the absolute spirit control

of mediums is not confined to set *seances*, and, probably, their thoughts and feelings are more or less influenced by other individualities at all times.

There is a great want in England of mediums through whom evidence of the personal identity of the spirits who profess to communicate can be proved. In America there are several good test-mediums, so in this respect our Transatlantic cousins have the advantage of us. If a medium is so sensitive that any spirit, good, bad, or indifferent accompanying any mortal who may come into the presence of that medium, shall have power to control his organism, his own individuality must be destroyed, at all events for the time being, to a very great extent. To what degree, then, should a medium of this kind be considered responsible for his acts, and to what extent should Spiritualists be held responsible for the acts of such sensitives, it being certain that by the exercise of proper care on the part of friends of the medium many dangers may be averted? There are some few very experienced Spiritualists, who hold the extreme idea that some of our most sensitive mediums may be away from their bodies for weeks, or even months at a time, leaving them under the control of some foreign intelligence, either with or without their own consent. Before any such ideas had occurred to me, or been mooted to me by others, consequently before any such thoughts were in my own mind, a message was given to me through the mediumship of Dr. J. R. Newton to the effect that he had tasted all that he would ever know of death, and was practically but one of a band of spirits who were controlling his bodily organism for useful purposes, beneficial to mankind at large. He was an extremely sensitive medium, so sensitive that if anybody of a positive turn of mind sat and talked to him for more than ten minutes at a time he had a tendency to fall into a trance sleep.

TO WHAT EXTENT DO THE THOUGHTS OF SITTERS AT SEANCES INFLUENCE THE MESSAGES RECEIVED?

Quitting the question of the amount of moral responsibility of mediums for their own acts, I will bring forward another problem, namely, "To what extent are the messages through mediums derived from the thoughts of persons present at the *seance*?"

From time to time a great deal has been published in the spiritual periodicals about the mediumship of Miss Lottie Fowler, the American clairvoyante, and a critical description of what I know in connection with her mediumship will aid in explaining the nature of the problem.

Soon after Miss Fowler came to England, I met her for a few moments at a public meeting and did not see her again until a week or two afterwards, when I called upon her unexpectedly and alone, for a *seance*. I went alone in consequence of being aware that the revelations are often more confused when the influences of several persons in the room act at the same time upon a sensitive.

She sat in the chair opposite me, took me by the hand, and began to shiver. Her hand gradually became cold, her eyeballs rolled up in an unnatural manner, and she passed into the trance state, after which she was controlled by a remarkably talkative spirit who called herself "Annie," who proceeded to enlighten me about my own affairs, past, present, and to come. I took down what she said in shorthand, and my first impressions about it were, that with some few exceptions, the revelations were of a very foggy and indefinite nature, but afterwards there were good reasons for changing that opinion.

The circumstance which made most impression upon me at the time was this: Annie proceeded to describe a house, which I did not recognise, and I was speculating, as she spoke, whether it might not have been a farmhouse in which some years of my early life were spent. While these thoughts were passing through my mind Annie said, "It is not the house you are thinking about, but another." I said, "What house am I thinking about?" and Annie proceeded to describe it most accurately. She told me of the road leading to it, of the garden by its side, of the pond with willow trees in front, of the large mass of trees which looked like a wood, but which was not a wood, to the right of the house; it was not large enough to be properly called a wood. She also said the whole scene was just outside the village. Did she really see this house? I think not, except in my thoughts, for her description of it was exactly the same as my own description of it would have been, had I been called upon for one. She also described it from the same point of view that I should have selected, but she stated one thing not in my mind, namely, that she saw a large black dog inside the house. I have no recollection of having seen a large black dog there, so if her revelation in any way came from my mind, that black dog, was and is so completely forgotten that it cannot even now be brought to memory.

On examination of the large amount of testimony given by different persons in the spiritual periodicals, during the past few years, about the revelations concerning their past lives, made to them through Lottie Fowler's mediumship, it may be seen that the greater part of what they were told, had been at some time in their own minds. Consequently, to clear up this matter, inquirers who publish facts relating to clairvoyance, should be careful to separate revelations made about occurrences known to themselves, and revelations about circumstances not within their knowledge.

Yet the assumption of thought-reading, or of the influence of one mind over another, will not cover the whole ground, should anybody seek to use this argument to do away with the idea of the intervention of spirits. On that same day, Miss Fowler told me that in a few days time, I should meet a friend ill with a sore throat, and that a little later still, he would have a fever, but that it would be nothing very serious, he would soon be all right again. A few evenings afterwards, I met a very energetic member of this Association, who also is present with us to night. He complained of having a sore throat, and he was well wrapped up in consequence. Miss Fowler's prophecy did not occur to me at the time of meeting him, but the whole thing flashed into my mind next morning. Shortly afterwards I told him of her revelation, and asked him whether he had had a fever? He told me he had had a slight attack of fever, down at Brighton. I remarked in reply that it must have been a very slight one, for I had not heard anything about it. He replied that at all events it was sufficiently serious to bring him under the hands of the doctor. These circumstances were certainly remarkable, although if they stood by themselves, and no analogous facts in relation to clairvoyance were on record, coincidence might be brought in as an explanation. At any rate there was no thought-reading of any kind in this case.

That same day Miss Fowler revealed to me certain events which were to happen in the future, and she

narrated certain business occurrences, which, I then, in my own mind, expected would happen. She described certain persons, places, and furniture most accurately. Time passed away, but the events prophesied did not take place.

I asked Annie how she obtained the information? She said that she saw spirits about me, and was telling me what they had told her to repeat. Sometimes she could not see these spirits clearly, and she had a difficulty in getting messages from them. Assuming this statement to be accurate, possibly she may have gained her information from spirits near me, almost as limited in their knowledge as myself, just as many of the voice-spirits who accompany certain physical mediums, are on the same mental plane with the medium, and do not know much more than the medium himself. It is as easy to assume this, as to assume thought-reading. Time and experience alone will furnish the solution of problems like these.

Some other things she told me were of a symbolical nature, much resembling in character some of the revelations of Swedenborg. I could not understand their meaning.

One other good case of independent clairvoyance, or of the independent action of spirits, in which neither the mind of the medium nor the minds of any of the persons present could have been supposed to produce the results, occurred at a *seance* at which Mr. N. F. Dawe, of 2, Portman chambers, Portman-square, myself, and others, were present. The circle was small and harmonious. Miss Fowler (or Annie rather), told a lady present, that she saw a coffin near her, which was not her own, and that her son was ill with a fever. Mr. Dawe, who did not wish the lady to be frightened, told Annie it was all nonsense, that the absent son was quite well, and that his mother had received a letter from him only that morning, stating him to be in good health and spirits. Annie accordingly said nothing more upon the subject. Several weeks later a telegram came from Liverpool, announcing that the son of the lady had been taken ill with the yellow fever, and died in a hospital at Valparaiso, South America. It was afterwards ascertained that at the very time Lottie Fowler announced at this *seance* held in the west end of London, that the son of the lady was ill of a fever, he was actually ill with the fever in South America; he died not many hours after Lottie Fowler made the statement about the coffin. This seems to be a good clear case of true psychological revelation, with which the minds of the persons present had nothing to do.

The gentleman through whose writing mediumship spirits have recently given extracts from their own writings previously unknown to the medium, which extracts have been discovered to be true on subsequent research in the British Museum Library and elsewhere, finds that he cannot get reliable messages except when sitting in a room by himself. He can, however, get the messages in a crowded room, provided that the thoughts of nobody present are directed towards him, and that the persons present do not know that he is receiving spirit messages.

Dr. Dunn, the medium who accompanied Mr. Peebles in his recent tour round the world, told me that once he was a test medium, for answering sealed letters directed to spirits. He sat in a room by himself, with his left hand on the letter, when his other hand began apparently automatically to write the reply. When



anybody was in the room with him at the time, the answers were unreliable, and sometimes confused.

At Miss Cook's *seances*, and at some others, where materialisation phenomena are produced, the spirits often say that the chief use of the cabinet is to get the medium free, to some extent, from the influences of the sitters in the circle. The singing so constantly demanded at *seances* tends to prevent concentration of thought upon the medium; it may possibly tend also to produce synchronously certain physiological actions.

Mr. and Mrs. Jencken informed me a few days ago, that their little baby, less than two months old, is a medium. When Mr. Jencken holds it over a table, raps come from the table. As the baby cannot be supposed to be troubled with preconceived opinions, or theological or other kind of bias, it would be deeply interesting to know the nature of all the messages given through its mediumship. Every word should be carefully written down. Will the communications prove to be absolutely reliable and unchanged spirit messages? Will they be of the same nature as if obtained through the mediumship of Mrs. Jencken? Will they partake of the nature of the thoughts of each person who may hold the baby over the table to get raps? Will the presence of two or more persons in the room influence the character of the messages? The results of experiments on these points will be deeply interesting.

Before quitting this subject of the causes influencing the reliability of revelations obtained through mediumship, the method used by the natives of Natal to increase the reliability of clairvoyance, may be mentioned. They give their clairvoyants impepo to eat for the purpose. Could not some of this impepo be obtained by the Dalston Association from the savages, through the kindness of Canon Calloway, of Springvale, South Africa, and be carefully administered by a medical gentleman to a clairvoyant, say Miss Lottie Fowler, who is ever willing to sacrifice herself to the cause of science? The results would be valuable, and there would be a large attendance of members on the occasion.

#### HOW SHOULD MEDIUMS BE PROTECTED FROM DANGER AND TROUBLE?

Before closing this brief address, it may be well to raise the question, "How can mediums be protected by Spiritualists?" If Spiritualism were to be defined as the science of the affections, it would not be very far from the truth, and it is a very great error to approach the subject from the physical side. My early investigations were chiefly made from a physical science point of view. The great idea was to apply tests, not for my own satisfaction, but for the benefit of others too indolent to inquire for themselves. I sought to obtain the phenomena under such conditions of mechanical accuracy, as to exclude questions as to integrity of character, spirituality, and the higher faculties of the human being altogether from the problem. I found myself baffled at every point. Physics has thrown no light upon the causes, or laws of any of the phenomena of Spiritualism, and although certain physical conditions to a certain extent appear to favour the production of the phenomena, right mental conditions have infinitely more power.

In the whole of this subject physical demonstration seems as a rule, not without exceptions, to succeed and not to precede the spiritual state. When people meet together who know they do not cheat each other, and who have a truthful medium in their midst, the phenomena take place with great power; but let a man enter

that company in an unfriendly spirit, or governed by impure motives—such as personal ambition or the idea he is a great authority sitting in judgment upon people less intelligent than himself—then those marvels of physics, which he would almost give his ears to behold, occur with less power, or cease altogether. Yet, to meet the requirements of this class of mind, there are a few mediums, like the Davenports, who can bear the roughest of influences, and to those mediums should Spiritualists recommend such persons to go.

The lower spirits seem to have more power than the higher ones over common matter; hence those disturbances which take place in haunted houses are nearly all caused by spirits of a very low order, a murder or some other crime having usually been committed on the spot. Spirits of a low order, but possibly with good intentions, may surround powerful physical mediums; and mediums surrounded by this class of spirits are the right persons to be brought into contact with those who are merely hard materialists with no natural spirituality of character.

Perhaps, then, the best way of protecting mediums is to so arrange our spirit circles that inquirers shall have to begin at the beginning, and to work their way up. They should begin with raps and tilts, and with the more common phenomena, but not be allowed to come to the best circles until they gain some understanding of the principles which govern the phenomena, and have acquired the knowledge that these things belong more to the realm of spirit than to the realm of its servant, matter. The higher mediums will then be saved from annoyance, the phenomena will develop with more rapidity, and the mediums will be protected from those dangers to which they are subjected by adverse influences. Apparently, when persons of a low order of mind constantly surround a medium, spirits of a correspondently low order are obliged to act upon the medium to meet the requirements of the mortals present, thereby dragging the medium lower both mentally and morally.

A statement was printed some time ago, in *Public Opinion*, to the effect that in Paris it was a recognised fact that, if assistants of good character were required in any branch of business, Spiritualists were, as a general rule, better than others. If Spiritualism could be reduced to mechanics, that sentence could never have been written, because both saints and sinners can be united without any difficulty in one opinion as regards physical facts. For instance, a burglar and a bishop will each believe beyond question that the crowbar of the said burglar is three feet long, if a yard measure prove it so to be. Thus, physical facts merely serve to unite good and bad alike, whereas spiritual facts, in which questions of personal integrity and truthfulness of character become an essential element, can only unite people who have as much faith in the integrity of each other as in the integrity of ropes and chains. Those who believe the testimony of bars of iron only to be reliable and the testimony of human beings so rotten as to be utterly useless, have no business inside the ranks of Spiritualism, which demonstrates that there may be as much integrity in human nature as in iron bars; and that persons devoid of such integrity find it difficult to get into our ranks, is a circumstance which is highly beneficial to the character of the movement.

To recapitulate—The problems mooted in this paper are as follows, and I suggest that they be discussed in regular order:—

1. To what extent are powerful mediums morally responsible for their acts? 2. To what extent do the thoughts of sitters at *seances* influence the messages received? 3. What is the best method of protecting mediums from danger? 4. Why should not the Dalston Association, or some few of its members, try experiments in connection with mesmerism and clairvoyance?

So long as we do not know accurately to what extent the thoughts of mortals and the thoughts of spirits are mixed up in messages received through mediumship, it is somewhat premature for Spiritualists to declare to the general public that the spirits teach this, that, or the other doctrine, although on certain points, such as a state of progression after physical death, and the non-reality of eternal punishment, they all agree. Many problems connected with mediumship require solution before much can be said about the nature of the life of the freed spirit.\*

#### CONTINENTAL GHOST PICTURES.

RECENTLY Baron Kirkup, of Florence, has been giving attention to the subject of spirit photographs, and has learned by sad experience that the facilities for manufacturing sham ones are occasionally brought into illegitimate use. Some correspondence between Baron Kirkup and Mr. W. Crookes, F.R.S., is now lying before us, and from it we glean that Baron Kirkup once had a medium whom he could trust and with whom he could get spirit pictures. But when this medium left Florence, another photographer took his place. The latter was a Tuscan, and when Baron Kirkup went to the studio to sit for his portrait, the new assistant photographer told him he also was a medium. The Baron paid little attention to the remark, as he only wanted a likeness of himself. When he called again for the proofs, he was offered four excellent photographs, all of which had curious, but frightful, figures of spirits upon them.

The Baron says to Mr. Crookes:—

I asked him who they were? He did not know; it was not the first time he had met with such results. He seemed very indifferent about it, and not at all surprised. That evening I asked my spirits if these were evil spirits? "No." Why are they so ugly? "Because they choose to come as they are, and they were ugly, besides, when alive." Who were they? "Relations and friends of the photographer, of course." There is not the same perfect test of identity that there was for the portraits I sent you lately, all which persons I knew when alive in this world, and can answer for their perfect likeness, and I had obtained their promise to meet me and make their appearance with my mediums. In the present case the photographers charged no more than the usual price of a *carte de visite* of one person, and they had no notice of my visit, nor time to prepare shrouds and corpses.

No sooner had the Baron finished this letter than he found reason to add a postscript, in which he says:—

After writing the above, I enclosed the photographs, in doing which I perceived they had been tampered with. When I went for the proofs they gave me four only; I had ordered a dozen, and I returned next day for the other eight. I found them altered; the photograph number one has a nose in the first proof, the nose was the usual hole one sees in a skull, with a thin bone inside, which divides it vertically. The orbits were empty, and the teeth all visible, even the back ones. The next has a new nose, and eyes, and cheeks, why I cannot imagine, nor how it was done, as it is painted light over dark, which is difficult with water colours.

In photograph number two the process is simpler and easier. A piece of white cloth is painted on the face of the figure to the left, which is holding its hand with all its fingers

open. The face, before it was thus concealed, had all the features reduced to mere holes. I must go and inquire about it, and will let you know if I learn anything. To me it looks suspicious, and so does the cold indifference of the man, who has not thought it worth his while to come and drink tea with me, and inquire of my spirits who his deceased friends are who came to my sitting uninvited.

In a subsequent letter Baron Kirkup says:—

The other day I sent you three photographs of different spirits, two of which had been retouched by the painter of the photographic establishment. I asked him "why he did so," and I could get no answer. When I got home, I inquired of my own spirit friends what was the man's motive, and they told me it was well meant; he thought to please me by making the faces less hideous. I returned, and ordered some new proofs, as he said the negatives were preserved, telling him not to retouch them. I now send you two original proofs their history forms a new phase in the production of spirit photographs. I believe them to be real and genuine, though they have not the identity of those first subjects whom I had known well in their lifetime in this world, and who came at my request most punctually. Mind this is only opinion; but the facts are these:—I went unexpectedly and found a new man, whom I had never seen before. I went alone, without either of my mediums, and only required a portrait of myself. He took two photographs on one plate in fifteen seconds, as is their custom; he then asked me to sit still, and let him try another, as he wished to have a particularly good one. I agreed, supposing he intended to sell them, and that my crosses were the attraction. When I went some days after for the proofs, he gave me four (I had ordered a dozen of each), one of them being without spirits. I was charged only the price of a common *carte de visite* of one person. Now, if he had to hire all those persons, and pay for their dresses, it must have been expensive, and I went quite unexpectedly. There was no time for preparation; he had never seen me before, and did not require or expect these apparitions. He seemed as much surprised as I was, and did not know any of the spirits, though friends and relations of his, and not bad spirits, as I suspected from their ugliness. I am not a medium, it must have been himself.

A few days later Baron Kirkup wrote another letter, doleful in its tone. He says to Mr. Crookes:—

I sent you my last photographs, one of which was a portrait of myself, accompanied by a figure in white drapery, with the face of a corpse, and I had previously sent you the same, with the face painted over, as I thought, to make it look less hideous. I blamed them for taking so great a liberty without giving me notice. Since then I sent the death's head to a person in Rome, who suspected a fraud, and washed the dead face, which came off, and discovered a living face underneath it, which I had supposed to be the repainted one. You have got both photographs, and can examine them at your ease.

After so palpable a proof of their cheating, I have no difficulty in believing that the living figure was taken on a separate plate of glass, and then transferred to the negative of my portrait, and the face afterwards changed by repainting to that of a corpse, to attract notice and obtain customers.

Baron Kirkup then gives strong reasons for supposing that the owner of the photographic establishment knew nothing about it, he being a man of good standing, and that the tricks were played by his assistants.

A STORY has been floating in London for some time past, about a disbeliever in Spiritualism having been carried a mile or two by spirits from a *seance* at which he was present. After getting him out of one *seance* room, the spirits kindly put on his coat and hat lest he should catch cold, and not being able to get him into the other *seance* room of our respected friend Mr. Stokes, they dropped him into a back yard outside the house. Understanding that the gentleman who flew thus like an owl by night, will not bear testimony in the matter himself, nor give his name, no good can accrue to Spiritualism from any publication of the alleged circumstances. Is he the same person once described in the *Medium* as the "square man in a round hole," who exhibited at a *seance* his cleverness in imitating genuine spiritual manifestations?

\* The discussion which followed the reading of this paper will be found upon the next page.



## MEETING OF THE DALSTON ASSOCIATION.

ON Thursday last week, at the ordinary weekly meeting of the Dalston Association of Enquirers into Spiritualism, at their rooms, 74, Navarino-road, Dalston, E., Mr. Alfred E. Lovell, president, occupied the chair.

Mr. W. H. Harrison read a paper—which is published upon another page—on "Certain Problems connected with Mediumship."

The President stated that he thought it would be best that the three heads into which the paper was divided should be discussed *separatim*. The first head was "To what extent are powerful physical mediums responsible for their actions."

Mr. Algernon Joy was of opinion that mediums could not be held fairly responsible for actions which they might commit whilst under control, but that they were in a degree responsible for allowing themselves to be influenced by undeveloped spirits, who they knew would cause them to commit bad actions. He had always found in his experience, that where mediums were careful to sit only with moral and good people, they very rarely were subjected to adverse or evil influences. He instanced the case of a lady at Manchester, who was taken care of by a certain good spirit named "Estelle," who kept her medium out of mischief, guarded her from bad influences, and frequently took her out shopping under control, in which condition the medium invariably made better bargains than when in her normal state. Only on one occasion did a bad spirit succeed in getting hold of this medium; and then, had it not been for the superior influence of "Estelle," the bad spirit would have caused the medium to throw herself down a flight of stairs.

Mr. W. Volckman said, that in the paper just read, no distinction appeared to have been drawn between the influence of a spirit over a sensitive medium, and the influence of a powerful over a weak-minded person. There were many men and women—weak-minded persons—who were led to do evil by others possessing stronger wills. Were they, or those persons who led them astray, to be blamed.

Mr. J. C. Luxmoore said that for many years previous to the advent of modern Spiritualism he had been a close student of the phenomena of mesmerism, and his knowledge of that subject had greatly aided him when the phenomena of Spiritualism at length came under his notice. Although he fully believed in the actual personal responsibility of a medium, or of a mesmerist subject, to a very great extent, yet it was clear that the medium or subject was to a great degree, when under the influence of the spirit or the mesmerist operator, subject to their control. But he did not believe that it was in the power of any mesmerist to lead any sensitive person to commit a bad or immoral act, unless there was previously a tendency to commit such acts in the person he influenced. Some mesmerists did not agree with him upon this point, which had been one of great contention between his old friend Dr. Ashburner and himself. In all his extensive experience, he had found that the same rule held good with regard to spirit influence. Mediums of good principle could not be influenced to do what in their normal condition they would consider wrong, and regard with horror and disgust. His whole knowledge of the subject assured him that unless mediums had proclivities for evil, the spirits could not make them commit evil. If bad spirits did for a time annoy and interfere with good mediums, it was simply the result of inharmonious conditions for the time being, which conditions could always, with proper knowledge and care, be remedied. If he thought that all mediums could at any time be influenced by evil spirits to commit bad actions, he, for one, would have grave doubts as to whether it would be right to pursue experiments on the subject of Spiritualism at all.

A Lady Member narrated how a servant in her family was a powerful physical medium, and that on one occasion the manifestations through her had been of an objectionable character in the form of direct writing. But this happened when a sceptical and ill-natured person, strongly impressed with the idea of trickery being practised upon him, was present at the *seance*, and who annoyed and irritated the medium considerably. Messages, badly spelt, and of a disgusting nature, were given, and the gentleman mentioned the circumstances at his club.

Mr. C. W. Pearce was convinced that unless the tendencies of a medium were improper, the communications would, as a rule, be of a very kindly spirit, but still the general influence of spirits upon mediums was a fair subject for discussion; the opinions of Mr. Luxmoore, with his varied experience of many years, were most useful and reliable.

Still, he thought that enquirers should not plunge more deeply into the subject, without duly noting the effect of spirit control upon the various kinds of mediums, but should investigate with the special desire to discover whether or no the control of a pure minded medium by impure or undeveloped spirits would influence such a medium in a direction contrary to the general tenor of his or her life. He added that it was clear to him from his experience that mediums were not, even when in their normal state, at all times responsible for their actions. He would give an illustration. A young friend of his, aged about twenty, by name Bryant, was one day walking by himself about twenty yards in front of two friends, one of whom was an amateur mesmerist. This latter addressing the other said, "You see that young man in front of us, I will cause him to suddenly stop and remain fixed until we overtake him." Immediately Mr. Bryant stood still and remained immovable until overtaken by the other two. The mesmerist then said to him, "Why are you standing still, Mr. Bryant? Will you not come on with us?" "Standing still," said he; "well really I don't know why I did stop. If I had any reason I've forgotten it. Yes, I'll go on with you." Mr. Pearce added that, knowing the exceeding sensitiveness of this young gentleman, he himself, when in his company at the house of his father, asked permission to be allowed to try to exert an influence over him. He asked him to go out of the room, and stand about a yard or two from the door, which was to be shut. Mr. Pearce then asked the company present what he should will him to do, and they said, "to come up close to the door." He willed this, and in a few moments Mr. Bryant was heard bumping against the door, and shouting out "I am close against the door." The company then desired Mr. Pearce to "will" him back again, and he did so, Mr. Bryant falling back away from the door. The experiment was afterwards repeated by Mr. Pearce going out of the room and Mr. Bryant remaining within, Mr. Pearce being accompanied by one of the guests, to whom he imparted his intentions in the order in which he willed Mr. Bryant to carry them out. This was done to prove to the company that there was no collusion between himself and Mr. Bryant. Everything that he willed to have done by Mr. Bryant was so done by him. Mr. Pearce continued that he had reason to believe that there was a correlation of forces in the realm of metaphysics, as there was in physics, and therefore if the purely motor muscles could be influenced without a consciousness on the part of the medium of how or in what direction the influence was to be exerted, the more interior planes of the mind might be reached and acted upon, without the operatee being conscious of an external power controlling him.

Dr. Henry Smith said that he had listened with the greatest interest to Mr. Harrison's paper, and had gathered from it much that coincided with his own views on the subject. He would give an instance of a bad spirit controlling a good medium. Some time ago at Nottingham he (Dr. Smith) engaged a reporter, a Baptist and a very good and worthy man, to report some meetings at which he lectured. The reporter told him that he thought all Spiritualists to be insane. However, this reporter attended two *seances* by way of experiment, and was found to be, to his own utter astonishment, a powerful physical medium. One day, while attending professionally an election meeting, this unlucky reporter was suddenly possessed by the spirit of one of the notorious "Nottingham Lambs," who made him throw down his book and pencil, and set to work fighting furiously at all who came near. Some of those present with great difficulty took him away, fully persuaded he had gone mad, and when he recovered he had not the slightest recollection of what he had done whilst under influence. Now this reporter was a good and moral man, a member of a strict religious community, and yet he was subjected to such an evil influence quite beyond his control.

Mr. Harrison, in the course of his reply, said that in the case put by Mr. Volckman, the weak-minded person had the power of applying his own reasoning faculties to the arguments of the stronger minded individual, but in mediumship the reasoning powers of the sensitive were not consulted. The medium was a passive instrument in the hands of another. If mediums were irritated or went into a passion, unpleasant manifestations were sure to follow; he had seen such cases often, and especially remembered one which took place when some enquirers from Scotland were present.

The President then put forward the second head for discussion. "To what extent do the thoughts of the sitters at *seances* influence the messages received?"

Mr. C. W. Pearce, speaking with special reference to Mr. Harrison's experiences with clairvoyants, which, he said

clearly pointed to the conclusion that in the majority of the cases cited, the sphere of the knowledge possessed by the circle or questioner, had given form to the vision or perception of the sensitive, and he could give more than one illustration, were not the time at his disposal necessarily limited, that there were clairvoyants with independent vision. The one instance he would give occurred in his own house. A young lady, from Norwich, was staying with his wife. The young lady was very clairvoyant at times, and one evening Mr. Pearce asked her if she would try and find her mother, and see what she was doing; she consented, and he put her to sleep. In a few minutes she announced that she saw her mother at a party, and one of the guests, a minister, was leading her mother to the pianoforte. She then heard her mother sing, and saw the minister, after she had finished playing, lead her back to her seat, and then take her to supper. When the young lady awoke, and was told what she had described, she laughed heartily at what she termed "her nonsense," for she was sceptical about her own powers. However, Mr. Pearce persuaded her to write and ask her mother how she was engaged on that evening, and at that particular time. The letter was written the next day, and posted; but on the morning of the day after the letters crossed, a letter was received by Miss S—— from her mother, in which her mother mentioned the party, and the music, and the supper, and her having been taken into supper by the minister after she had played and sung at his request a particular song. Mr. Pearce concluded by saying that the case just mentioned not only proved independent clairvoyance, but it *might* also prove that the message conveyed in the letter Miss S—— received from her mother, was not a reproduction of the thoughts of the daughter, but caused by the intense desire of the daughter to know whether "her nonsense were fact."\*

Mr. Luxmoore had met with several instances in which clairvoyants gave not only diagnoses of diseases, but also the proper remedies for them; whilst in their normal condition these clairvoyants knew nothing whatever of medicine. He had recorded a striking example of this in the *Zoist*.

Mr. Harrison in reply said, that little had been raised in this part of the discussion that required answer from him. The experience of most people who had studied Spiritualism carefully was, that in nearly all cases communications were to a greater or less degree influenced by the minds of the medium or sitters, and frequently by both. Indeed, it would seem that conditions had rarely been obtained so perfectly as to obviate this entirely.

The President then read the third head for discussion. "What is the best method of protecting mediums from undeveloped influences?"

Mr. Luxmoore said, I would say, by surrounding them with none but kindly and affectionate sitters—by such as attend *seances*, not with minds full of ideas of trickery and deception, but with minds desirous of searching for truth. It is invariable in all spiritual experience, that when we go out honestly in search of truth we find truth, but if we go out in search of falsehood, with minds predisposed against the acceptance of facts, we often find falsehood. The influence of any minds in a circle that suspect the medium is bad and hurtful alike to the medium and the manifestations. Indeed, the influence of suspicion is most detrimental, and enables adverse spirits to come and produce manifestations that have all the appearance of trickery on the part of the unfortunate medium. I would not admit for instance, to circles where the more advanced physical phenomena are obtained, those who were strangers to the elementary phenomena of tilts and raps. Nay, I will go further, and say that there are many Spiritualists—of some experience too—whom I would not admit to such circles for fear of breaking down the manifestations and injuring the medium. All who inquire into the marvellous phenomena of Spiritualism should begin at the beginning, and form circles at their own homes, in their families, and with trustworthy friends, for the elementary manifestations, without a proper knowledge of which the wonderful higher developments could neither be understood nor appreciated. He was very careful not to invite to his house persons who had not full confidence both in his own honesty and that of the medium. (Applause.)

Mr. Harrison—Undoubtedly there is a reflex action between the state of mind of the sitters and the manifestations. In cases where low-class mediums have played tricks, bad

influences from without may have been sometimes brought to bear upon them; hence the impulse to do wrong, of which evil and adverse spirits were only too ready to avail themselves. It was greatly to be wished that Spiritualists would study the kindred phenomena of mesmerism. Why could not the Dalston Association depute some of its members to inquire into and report upon these subjects? Such inquiry would be very valuable, not only to the members, but to Spiritualists at large.

Mr. Blyton suggested the formation of a committee of inquiry into such matters.

Mr. Harrison was sure that if such a course were adopted the members of the association, with their usual energy and care, would successfully carry it out.

Mr. Luxmoore proposed, and Dr. H. Smith seconded a vote of thanks to Mr. Harrison for his paper, which vote was carried unanimously.

Mr. Harrison said that it was a great pleasure to him to put his experiences upon paper for discussion by those who possessed a good knowledge of Spiritualism. It was also something to know that there was at least one society in London where such great questions had interest for so many members as the Dalston Association possessed. Whatever was done by the association, even though in a small way, was well and effectively done, and their proceedings were referred to and quoted throughout the country. He was glad that his paper had raised such an interesting discussion, and should be only too pleased if it resulted in the appointment of a committee to carry on mesmeric and other experiments.

The proceedings then closed with the customary vote of thanks to the President.

THE St. John's Association of Spiritualists will hold a *soirée* at Goswell Hall, 86, Goswell road, on the evening of New Year's Day, in aid of the Sunday lecturing fund of the society. Next Sunday evening Mr. T. Shorter will lecture at the hall on the "Religious Needs of the Age."

THE next meeting of the Council of the British National Association of Spiritualists will be held on Tuesday, December 9th. Perhaps after the council is fully formed, and all the officers appointed, the rules may undergo a further and last revision, after Spiritualists have had ample leisure to consider them.

MEDIUMSHIP OF A BABY.—Mr. H. D. Jencken, of 53, Brompton-crescent, writes:—"Our little boy continues to develop in his medial powers. Only fancy, the nurse counted four or five spirit hands making passes over his little form the other evening. Rappings on his pillow, and on the iron rail of the bedstead occur almost every day."

MR. GERALD MASSEY IN AMERICA.—Many press notices of the lecturing career of Mr. Gerald Massey in America, have reached us from the United States. The first lecture after his arrival was delivered at Harlem, subject, "Why does not God kill the Devil?" He took for his text the Man Friday's question to Robinson Crusoe—"If that God so strong, why Him not kill that Devil?" The *New York Sun*, the *Graphic*, the *New York Herald*, the *Tribune*, and other papers, have noticed his lectures. One of them says:—"They are immensely mistaken who assume that Gerald Massey has come to America to talk over the trivialities of table-tipping. He has explained in the *Golden Age* that by means of a very peculiar experience, he has struck on a lost track of ancient knowledge; the first fruits of this are in a few of his lectures, but the fuller unfolding will take one or two large volumes. There can be no doubt that Mr. Massey has most personal affection for the less popular of his subjects, or he would hardly have run the risk of offering these to audiences in New York against the advice of the 'Bureau,' and his more worldly-wise friends; it is because he feels that he has something new to say, and he thought this country the right place to say it. He proclaimed on Sunday night that Spiritualism, as he understood it and had wrought it out, was a new world's gift that amply repaid all America had ever received from the old world, and concluded his peroration with these words:—"It may be the dream was true; it may be I saw with visionary eyes. But as I strained them across the Atlantic long before I came, I saw your young world of the west arise and brighten with new life, quickening at the heart of her: this new dawn kindling in her face, throbbing and radiating with auroral splendour of this latest light, as if the millenium morning of humanity's most golden future had touched her forehead first, and she shone illumined, glorified and glorifying, as if in the very smile of God."

\* Or, may not the daughter have been mentally *en rapport* with her mother, and described the circumstances which were evidently uppermost in her mother's mind?—Ed.

## A TRANCE LECTURE.

LAST Saturday night, a lecture was delivered in the Freemasons' Hall, Newgate-street, Newcastle, by Mr. J. J. Morse, trance medium, on "The Religion of Spiritualism." There was a large and respectable audience, which was presided over by Mr. Armstrong, president of the Newcastle Society for Promoting Enquiry into Modern Spiritualism.

After devotional exercises had been gone through, Mr. Morse, in the trance state, began by saying that it was well worthy the consideration of all thinking persons whether Spiritualism were opposed to religion, whether or not the phenomena were a reality, whether Spiritualism was really worthy of being named a science, and whether it was worthy of the name of religion, or whether it was possessed of any religion whatever. For himself, he must contend that independent of older theologies Spiritualism held the germ of a priceless truth, that it would benefit humanity in all the relations of life, and that it held a claim of precedence over all religions which surrounded themselves with dogmas and creeds. But if it were not true, and further than that, if Spiritualism were no better than existing religions, it would be reasonable to ask what was the use of Spiritualism, and certainly very difficult on that ground to return a rational answer. In explaining the religion of Spiritualism they were sure to run the serious risk of wounding the keen prejudices of many friends, but nevertheless nothing should deter them from fully explaining their views on the subject. At the outset it would be as well to ask the question, what was meant by the term religion? Now their view or definition of the word might not be on the side of the vast majority; but was it not a fact that truth often was in favour of the minority? The conception, therefore, of religion was neither more nor less than a system built upon moral and philosophical evidence, which knew the nature of man, and knew how to meet the requirements of his nature. In other words, religion to be practically expressed must be by love and deeds. Now, Spiritualism brought advanced knowledge, and facts relating to the spiritual nature of man, and also his high duties in relation to the present life. They would thus find that the religion of Spiritualism was eminently practical. Religion and Spiritualism were said to be in direct and positive antagonism; in some cases they were, though not in all. Spiritualism endeavoured to unfold to their eyes the grand fact that part of happiness consisted in having good physical organisations, which were given them by a great, beneficent, creative Power, and which were given to them as a gift; and they should do their best to retain that purity which was given the grand and glorious structure at its birth. The religion of Spiritualism pointed out how the gift could be maintained, and on that foundation it based its claim to practicability. It stood forward on behalf of a practical humanity in its physical condition; it did not run counter to scientific discoveries or scoff at material researches, or trample under foot or scorn any discoveries that might be brought forth into the light of day. Nay, it appropriated such knowledge, welcomed it as a friend, and spiritualised it. Yet there were those who asserted Spiritualism to be a most unscientific thing, of no earthly use whatever. Those who made use of such assertions showed that they scarcely knew much about the subject. Another department of the question was that relating to the individual soul, and the spiritual body belonging to it. Spiritualism points out, like other religions, that death comes some time or other to all; that whilst the body is consigned to the cold earth, the spirit of man is taken to the realms of immortality. It told them that death simply began the final career of the individual, and that all must undergo the change. It also taught how they must make the best use of their powers and bow with reverential awe to the Creator of their being, so that at all times they could stand prepared to face, not fear, God's messenger death, and reverentially and humbly trust the superior power of wisdom that guides all things wisely and well. Now the question that arose was, what, then, can Spiritualism teach the individual better than other religions have done and are doing? Well, if religion were extricated from the creeds and dogmas which covered it, then he would be bound to confess that Spiritualism could teach people nothing more. But religion was overflooded with such creeds and dogmas, and Spiritualism not being so, therefore Spiritualism was in a position to teach more than other religions could. How? Well, it taught that immortality was not physically dependent upon any condition of being; that people will only be happy in

proportion to the good they do, and miserable in proportion to the evil effects of evil in themselves. (Hear, hear.) Spiritualism preached individual responsibility, and that to possess happiness man must depend upon his own efforts to gain it. He must live in accordance with the laws which govern his being; and when he did so, assuredly as the sun brought forth light and life, so would man reap the fruit of his well-doing, and possess a spiritual elevation and a spirit of fraternal love and charity. Thus, were Spiritualism to permeate all classes of society, and the world in general, individuals would be very cautious in condemning their brethren, lest the same persons in turn might condemn them, or their own conscience might condemn them. Spiritualism taught them that they were all the children of one Father, and when the world could realise this grand truth, who then should say, "I am of the chosen people, and those are not of the chosen;" or who shall say, "I am specially favoured by the Most High, and those are not?" No, Spiritualism did away with such a theory, for all were the children of one Father; and each should uphold, sympathise, and use kindness, and love one another, and also have the love and kindness of God. Thus, if humanity were to embrace these principles, people would lose that harsh, bitter feeling which caused class to be set against class. Humanity would stand united in love and truth. Spiritualism quarrelled with no religion in the full sense of the word, but it did quarrel with dogmas and creeds, which cover religion. Spiritualism taught that every effect must have a cause. Some might say, "But, then, every man believes that." Yes, but some men believe it in things of a more marvellous nature than others. Spiritualism taught and preached the existence of the individual soul; that it was destined for an immortality. It showed that the creative Power was infinite, and the consciousness of man finite. Thus, it is stated, they fought not with the principle of religion, but rather desired to bring forward such a light that all should feel its force and brilliancy. They would not deal with the question of a Deity. They could not, in fact, for it would need the intelligence of a god to weigh and mark out the powers of the Deity; it would need powers greater and grander, and powers higher than the most powerful soul ever possessed. They could not solve the problem of the Deity; they could not measure it, nor dive down into the hidden mystery therein contained. All true thinkers found that the problem of God was an insolvable one. They only knew that God was their Father, and that He was the cause of their existence. Innumerable had been the works published, great had been the labours bestowed, to show the existence and power of the Deity. Now, if those persons had spent their valuable time upon problems which could be solved, it would have been a great deal better for humanity. Had they striven to solve the problem of the causes of intemperance, poverty, depravity, and crime, better would it have been for the world at large; because whilst striving to solve the great problem, all those evils which afflicted humanity were gathering their forces and eating the very life of humanity, making a canker at its very core. They might show by enlightenment how virtue was superior to vice, and the best of all blessings for humanity. Better would it be for such persons to do such work than attempt to solve the attributes of God, who works in and through them. (Applause.) Spiritualism was content to rest upon the fact of the existence of God, and held that infinite love, justice, and wisdom were the attributes of the Deity. The religion of Spiritualism taught that God was Master as well as Father, Lord, and King. In regard to the realms of the spiritual world, Spiritualism taught individual responsibility—that each one was to obtain his happiness in the present world, and also in the world to come. In the spirit world there were neither Roman Catholics, Protestants, Dissenters, nor the creeds from the western, eastern, northern, or southern parts of the earth—in the spirit world no distinction of creed was known. Before proceeding much farther, he might here remark that if Spiritualism taught these things, what was there to cause the frivolous to laugh at it, or that it should be branded with stigma? The religion of Spiritualism also dealt with other important questions; it taught how the individual could love his fellows in his relation to the present life. It gave a conception of what his duty was. One duty was to be charitable and kind to all—never to condemn anyone until they had thoroughly investigated the cause and effect of any error that might be imputed to a person, no matter how dark and terrible the crime might be. Some might say, "Oh, but that would

upset the order of things and society." Why, they as Spiritualists would only be too heartily glad if such a change could be brought about and come to pass. (Hear, hear.) He fancied he heard others say, "Your words are very good, but after all what is it? Why, it is only morality you have been speaking about. It is only appealing to the intellect—to choose the right and leave the wrong. It is only morals. You only teach men to be better, because good is good. You only teach people to be good because it is wise to be good and will ennoble and elevate them." Others, again, might say, "As such, it is a lamentable failure, because, as the other has said, you have simply taught men to be good because it is best to be good; but you do not take into account the necessity of a religious teaching. Where is your religious element? Take the religion of morals, and it is nothing; but introduce religion into morals, and it makes the thing entirely different." In answer to such persons, he might ask—what religion is doing right before the sight of God? Which is the right and which is the false? Was it not the essence of religion to make bad men good, and, if it were possible, good men better still? Did not morality do the same? Where then was the difference? Instead of there being a wide difference, it was in heart one and the same thing. Some of his religious friends, however, would say, "Well, now, I will do a good deed to-day, and after I have done so I shall be rewarded in the future." Sorry indeed was he for such a person's morality. People must do good with no idea or expectation of receiving reward in the future world. They must do good without fee or reward, and with a single hand battle for truth and goodness. Possessing such an influence within their minds, they would stand erect amidst the shock and ruin of the world. (Applause.) Nay, when the angel Death claimed them as his own, they would be ready to meet the angel calmly, because knowing from the depths of their own souls that they had ever striven to be true to the principles they held dear—that they had striven to be good for goodness's sake; that they had practised charity and holiness for their own sakes—they would pass over the silent river, ascend the immortal plain, receive the starry crown, hear angelic voices, and whilst being led on with greeting and acclaim, they could clearly say "I have striven to do my duty." (Loud applause.) Religion asked no more of them, for it only asked them to love God and man, tell the truth, be honest, and practise charity. In doing so religion assured them that God would welcome them to a better world hereafter. Was there such a great difference between the essence of religion and the teaching of Spiritualism? No; they were one and the same. (Applause.) Many said of persons who believed in the advancement of truth, and allowed themselves to be open to conviction, "Oh, they change their views; I won't believe in them." Such was the exclamation of the old fossil believers. (Laughter.) Why, if such persons believed in the advancement of science and other subjects, why, then, should they not believe in the advancement of things pertaining to religion? If progress was seen in every department, why should it not be in man's spiritual nature. The lecturer, in the course of his peroration, urged upon those present to prize the truth and practise the virtues enunciated, so that when they were called to the spiritual world angels would crowd round them, the voice of the Father would be addressed to them, saying, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast ended thy mortal career, immortal happiness dawns now for ever on thee." (Loud applause.)

At one stage of the proceedings a respectably dressed man left the centre of the hall, and walked upon the platform in an apparently unconscious condition, and remained in a standing attitude for some time, as if he were utterly oblivious to all that was transpiring.

A gentleman said the man on the platform was a friend of his, and of late he had taken great interest in *seances*. Lately he had become quite under the influence of mesmerism, or Spiritualism, and it had made him very weak and unwell. Would Mr. Morse give his opinion as to what was best to be done in the matter.

Mr. Morse replied that if the man's nervous state could not stand the strain, it would be better for him to cease attending *seances* for the present, until his body was in a stronger condition.

The lecturer then sat down, and began to rub his eyes like one waking from a sleep, and he then came out of the trance state.

Votes of thanks were then accorded to the lecturer and the chairman.

At this stage of the proceedings the man alluded to suddenly awoke from his apparent trance, or mesmeric condition, and left the platform in evident confusion.

The proceedings were then brought to a close.

### PATENTING A PLANCHETTE.

THE *Banner of Light* has published much correspondence of late between the United States Patent Office and General Lippitt, about the patenting of a piece of apparatus connected with Spiritualism. Last Monday the *Daily News* summarised the whole case as follows:—

"The Government of the United States are at the present moment assailed by a difficulty which, whilst it has attracted less universal attention than that connected with the *Virginians*, may to some people appear to be of not less importance. It appears from a letter written to the *New York Tribune* by Mr. Robert Dale Owen, that General Lippitt, 'now of Cambridge, but formerly a favourably-known and successful lawyer in San Francisco,' has invented an article called a psychic stand and detector. The name affords but slight assistance in guessing what General Lippitt's invention may be, but Mr. Owen kindly helps us by adding that the 'function' of the article is that of 'spelling out words and sentences, usually called spiritual communications, through an alphabet not only invisible to the operator, but the very location of which he cannot know.' General Lippitt applied in the usual course for a patent, which was refused upon the grounds that the American Patent Office cannot concede the truth of Spiritualism, as, though individual scientists may, as applicant says, have given the phenomena some attention, scientific men as a body, or in any great numbers, have never conceded their reality.' The injury of refusing a patent for the psychic stand might have been borne by the General, but the patent examiner wantonly proceeded to add insult by observing that 'the office is disposed to believe that as a game table or means of amusement the device might be more favourably received;' but in such case a new specification is required, in which 'all allusions to the use of the device by mediums should be avoided.' As might have been expected, the gallant General and quondam lawyer refused with scorn to have the psychic stand and detector officially advertised as a toy, and he carried his case to the Appeal Court, where it now rests. A psychic stand and detector would probably have an equally large sale under any other name. But General Lippitt feels that there is a principle at stake, and, taking for his motto, *Aut Psychic Stand aut nullus*, he is prepared, if necessary, to shed the last drop of his blood in the struggle with a sceptical Patent Office."

### THE PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF EDINBURGH.

THE second session of this society was opened on Wednesday, 22nd October. The president, Dr. G. B. Clark, delivered an inaugural address, reviewing the operations of the society since it started. He also spoke of the present position of psychology, and its various phenomena.

On Wednesday, 5th November, Mr. Keith read a paper on certain remarkable phenomena he had observed in London, Kingston-on-Thames, and Glasgow; he also described a *seance* that took place at his residence in Portobello with Mr. Duguid, the Glasgow medium, when very extraordinary manifestations occurred, such as voices joining in the singing, a piano playing of its own accord, and accompanying the singing.

The President, who was present at the *seance* in Portobello, stated that they were very much indebted to Mr. Duguid for coming so often to oblige them, and thought that some testimonial should be given to him in acknowledgment of his courtesy.

Mr. Brown, 10, St. Andrew's-square, was elected an ordinary member.

On Wednesday, 19th November, Mr. J. M. Morrison, M.A., read a paper on the conditions, especially the physical conditions, necessary to elicit the phenomena. He is constructing a working model of a proper *seance* room.

The treasurer reported that a number of strange lights had been seen at a *seance* on his business premises.

Mr. William Buchanan, M.D., 3, Carleton-terrace, was elected as an ordinary member.

THE Rev. F. R. Young has been lecturing actively of late on Spiritualism, at Bath, and in the West of England.

## Poetry.

## SONNET.

A POET once, who pondered on the night,  
And all the starry glories brought to view  
By absence of the sun, who doth renew  
Earth's beauties more, the stronger be his light,  
Did question that—as he deceives our sight,  
And hides far sweeter, aye, and far more true—  
And soul-inspiring things than he doth show—  
So life deceives, and hides a fairer light?  
Oh! not as he, in dimness of belief,  
But with a firm assurance do we stand,  
Holding the proofs of life and joy to come,  
Brought by the happy dwellers in that land;  
Their love the same, but only purged of grief,  
Linking the earthly to the heavenly home.

ADAMANTA.

## Correspondence.

[Great freedom is given to correspondents, who sometimes express opinions diametrically opposed to those of this journal and its readers.]

## THE MEETING AT FINSBURY.

SIR,—Your report of my remarks with reference to a *seance* at the house of Mr. and Mrs. Guppy, is correct in all but one statement; but that is of such importance to my own mind, that I beg leave to set you right. You say that I said I had “expressed a wish that as it was to be in the dark, anything that spirits might be supposed to bring into the room might be too large to have been concealed in the room previously.” Such was not my point. Some days before the *seance* I expressed the hope that whatever might be imported through the locked door in the dark might be too large to have been concealed about the clothing of anyone present. It was on this account that I asked for the bandbox. I need not recall the fact that each thing thrown on the table was such as might have been concealed in the pockets of persons present, and, the darkness being absolute, thrown upon the table without observation. MONCURE D. CONWAY.

## THE ST. JOHN'S ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.

SIR,—Many of your readers will be glad to know that Mr. T. Everitt gave a lecture last Sunday about those deeply interesting direct writings given at his circle, to the St. John's Association of Spiritualists, in the Goswell Hall, Goswell-road. A large and a very attentive audience was present, although no publicity had been given in advance to the circumstance that the lecture would be delivered. He has promised to give the Association another reading shortly, containing extracts from some remarkable spirit messages upon the “Truthfulness of the Christian Religion,” which were given to special circles of sitters selected by the spirits themselves. Mr. Everitt began by reading Daniel, chap v., 5th verse, “And there came forth the fingers of a man's hand and wrote upon the plaster of the wall.” In his introductory remarks, he said this proved man's continued existence after he had left his material body, and that he was able in ancient times to return and give a written message to his brethren who were still in this outer world. He went on to show that if spirits could give direct written communications in those days, so also they could in these days. He then read some of the messages received by direct writing given at his circle, and he made comments as he went on. The first paper told of the nearness of the spirit world, and that man knows little of it. Next he read a paper showing that it was the privilege of our forefathers to hold converse with the inhabitants of the other world; this paper also gave a condensed history of ancient spirit communion, as recorded in the Scriptures. Then followed a paper upon “The Valley of the Shadow of Death,” which showed that the death of the body was not the death generally spoken of in the Word (or *Logos*); but that the living in sin was usually meant by the term “death” in the Scriptures. He further read a paper showing that this is only a world of effects, and that the spirit world is the world of causes; that all our inventions and discoveries are first known to the inhabitants of the cause world, and that when the inhabitants of this world are prepared to receive them, they are infused into the minds of persons who are endeavouring to make inventions and discoveries.

After quoting several more papers upon various subjects, but all of a religious character, he read three papers upon the attributes of Deity as his own spirit friends had been taught upon this great subject in their world. The papers were profoundly interesting, and were listened to with great attention.

Other matters were brought by him before the audience, who listened with marked attention throughout. I hope that Mr. Everitt will continue to give readings from these most interesting papers; coming as they do by direct writing from the spirit world, they throw great light upon Spiritualism, and are calculated to make a deep impression upon the minds of those who hear them. C. WEST.

138, Holloway-road, N.

## MADAME LOUISE'S MEDIUMSHIP.

SIR,—In thanking you for inserting my last, I may state that my intention to turn the remarkable powers of our medium to account in the cause of truth, has lately been strengthened by another *seance*, under test conditions, applied to the principal feature of Madame Louise's mediumship—the materialisation of spirit forms. I have had a great many sittings, some of them under severe crucial tests, and on some occasions, of course, failures. In reviewing these results, I am bound to confess, that the failures occurred when there was plenty of room for cheating; and, on the other hand, the best results were connected with severe test conditions. Many different faces appeared, but none of them having the slightest resemblance to the face of the medium. Our principal spirit friend, Bertie, appeared, and looked very beautiful. We tied the medium round the waist (with thin tape) and to the back of the chair with double knots, the ends let out from under the curtain. I placed a sheet of paper on these plainly visible ends, so that any pulling would displace it, and show the movement. The chair was placed with the back to the aperture. After the face vanished, we looked at the ends and paper on the floor, and found them exactly as before; but when the medium got out of the trance, there came a disturbance, and we felt rather alarmed about her, crying out, “What is the matter?” but joined her in a hearty laugh, when, lifting the curtain, we found that the medium had, on first awaking, forgotten the tying, and was embarrassed by vainly attempting to get off from the entanglement.

Manchester, November 29th, 1873.

C. REINERS.

## ORTHODOX SPIRIT MESSAGES.

SIR,—Having read extracts from communications through “X,” in your impression of the 28th ult., with much pleasure, and referring to what he observes upon the subject of the trustworthiness or otherwise of such communications, I send you an extract from a spirit communication, through me asserting, as “X's” message asserts, “that the glorious work of the Lord's redemption is commemorated in spirit-land;” also one in agreement with the following from “X's” communication—“Love divine invites all to be saved. Men doom themselves by rejecting the bliss prepared for them. He does not doom them.”

It will not, I suppose, be disputed that where two media, disconnected from one another, and of course without concert, allege the same things, a strong presumption, if not a proof, is furnished that what is so asserted is the truth, and if such confirmations were collected, they would be a powerful means of forming a body of important truths for the benefit of the world. G. B. PRICHARD.

Porto-Bello Lodge, Knight's-hill-road, Lower Norwood,  
Nov. 30th, 1873.

23rd January, 1870.—“You have to believe what we, your spirit friends, have told you. You have yet to exercise your reason to the full. You have to be convinced, as a man, who is a man, by that inestimable faculty with which he has been endowed by the infinite mercy of the Lord, for the sublimest purpose, that he might spiritually become his Son, and live for ever. You have, then, to know that man is judged hereafter by himself, because, as man, he is endowed with reason, though it is said he is judged by the Lord, under the title of the Son of Man, because it would be mere hallucination to believe that a rational creature is to be subject to a judgment—an arbitrary judgment—from a Superior Being, in which no reason nor justice can be seen by a rational though a finite being. There is the judge and there is the judged, residing in the same breast. The state hereafter is the state chosen by the judge and the judged, who may enter heaven, or hell, but elects that which suits the state—the spiritual state—which he has formed for himself in the world in which he was placed, to follow the footsteps of his divine Master and Teacher, and to increase in favour with God and man.”

Christmas-day, 1872.—“Let me discourse with you in the accents of love on this day, the anniversary of our Lord's descent upon the earth. The heavenly host at this present

are in jubilee, and have presented to their views in vivid and living colours the blessings that have flowed and continue to flow from this overpowering influence of our Saviour's love. The hallelujahs that proceed from the numerous choirs of angels in the vast kingdoms of the Lord above, swell their melodies in harmonies, permeating the heavenly atmospheres with ecstasies of love and joy, which no pen could describe nor tongue could utter, but can only be felt and perceived by the inhabitants of heaven, whose souls have been attuned to the unearthly sounds. Let, then, these choirs of gratitude and praise be felt, even by you, though still upon the earth, by attuning your soul to the appeals of love, peace, and good will to man, whom our Lord and Saviour succumbed to save, and in succumbing conquered all the powers of sin and death, that else would have swallowed up all living on the earth in the bosom of destruction. Live on then, and feel and understand, at each step more and more, the heavenly music that now rings with gratitude from the hosts of heaven. The light of the world is darkness in the sight of heaven, but that darkness will be relieved of its blackness, as the shades of falseness and appearances shall be tempered by the rays of divine truth now descending into the minds of men. Live on then, and remove the impediments to those heaven-born rays, &c., &c."

G. B. P.

SIR,—A letter in your last, signed "X.," said, in effect, that Spiritualists who were most apt to bring the charge that messages, received through other mediumship than their own, were coloured by the thoughts of the medium, were also slow to apply the same rule to their own case. There is justice in this view, since a true law must be universal. Some mediums can get the true names and addresses of persons they never knew in life, given through their mediumship, whilst the great majority cannot do so. This is the general rule for testing reliability which I would apply impartially to all mediums; this rule, I submit, gives much weight to the utterances of Mr. Morse, and of the medium through whom the "Spirit Teachings," occasionally published in your pages, are given. The said messages are thoroughly unorthodox.

It has been truly said that the road to orthodoxy is paved with children's brains, and it is tolerably certain that were not the intellects of children crushed in infancy, when too young to think, or to question the voice of authority, they would never accept incomprehensible theological creeds if presented to them for the first time after they had attained maturity. The late Dr. Hunt, founder of the Anthropological Institute, studied the mental disease or "religious mania," as he called it, produced by the present system of crushing the intellects of the young, and he said that it caused a premature closing of the sutures of the skull. All Spiritualists would do good to society by strenuously setting their faces against Sunday-schools. The Jesuits and priests of all theologies are generally aware that if they can get the control of children from the age of six till the age of fourteen, the unfortunates never afterwards in this life get free from their dogmas.

Y.

THE Rev. Hiles Hitchens preached against Spiritualism, which he denounced as sorcery, last Sunday morning at Eccleston-square Independent Chapel, Pimlico. It is a serious responsibility for a person whose business it is to teach truth about spiritual things, to teach the reverse of truth from want of knowledge, and to work in opposition to those beings who are endeavouring to bring spiritual light to man.

ST. JOHN'S ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS.—On Sunday last, Mr. T. Everitt read a paper on "Direct Spirit Writings," at Goswell Hall, 86, Goswell-road, in connection with this Association. Mr. West presided, and, in introducing Mr. Everitt, referred to the vast importance of obtaining a sure knowledge that there is a life after this, and of the position and circumstances in which we shall find ourselves in that life. In all ages, he said, it had been the lot of some few individuals to have intercourse with the spirit world, but that intercourse subjected them to torture and ill-treatment. Now we can investigate Spiritual manifestations without let or hindrance, and he was pleased to see so large an audience interested in the subject. He had been intimately associated with Mr. and Mrs. Everitt, and through the mediumship of the latter had realised the truth of Spiritualism in such a manner as to get a new and definite view of the future life, instead of a hazy speculation. Mr. Everitt then delivered an address, a notice of which will be found in our correspondence columns.

## SPIRITUALISM IN PIMLICO.

LAST Tuesday evening, a lecture on Spiritualism was delivered at the Pimlico Rooms, Warwick-street, Eccleston-square, S.W., by Mr. H. Venman. Mr. R. F. Battye, M.D., presided. There was a somewhat thin but superior and well-educated audience.

The Chairman said that he was there neither as an advocate nor an opponent of Spiritualism; he was merely a listener, who presided at the desire of his friend, Mr. Venman. There was much confusion in the popular mind about Spiritualism, and the lecture was intended to explain what the points of the case really were.

Mr. H. Venman said that he desired to deal impartially with Spiritualism, he having given much attention to it for a long time; he intended to deal with it as an open question, and to view it from a neutral standpoint. He regretted that it was a subject condemned by many without inquiry, and he believed the Dialectical Society to have been the only one which made a fair experimental inquiry into the alleged facts. He then mentioned various objections to Spiritualism, one of which was, "I don't know anything about it, therefore it must be electricity!" (Laughter.) If the public chose to deny that spirits could communicate with men, that line of argument virtually gave up the Bible; but if the public admitted the same, the facts would make atheism and materialism fall to the ground. He then briefly reviewed the history of modern Spiritualism from its first outbreak in the Fox family, at Hydesville, United States, and he said that it was first brought to England, by Mr. D. D. Home in 1855.\* He then went on to speak of spirit photographs, and assumed that under certain conditions spirit forms could reflect the ultra-violet rays of the spectrum, which could act upon sensitive collodionised films, although invisible to the human eye. He next instructed his listeners how to form circles at home. In the course of his lecture he quoted portions of Canon Calloway's paper to the Anthropological Institute very copiously.

The Chairman said that the lecture was a very fair and honest representation of what the Spiritualists believed. No doubt to many present it seemed as probable that the statements were true as that a pig could fly, but he thought that there was fair ground for argument on both sides of the question.

The Rev. Hiles Hitchens asked what was the use of Spiritualism?

Mr. Venman said, that as he had not admitted the truth of Spiritualism, he could scarcely go into the subject of its use. If it were true, he held that nearly everything in the universe had its use. Among professed Spiritualists were men of high scientific attainments and intellectual culture, far higher than himself, and they had framed from the facts of Spiritualism a consistent religion and philosophy.

Dr. Moore said that he wished they could have a seance there that evening.

The Chairman said, that after the second and concluding lecture next Tuesday there would be a discussion, which, he hoped would be conducted with good temper on all sides, the subject being an exciting one.

The proceedings then closed with the usual votes of thanks. Much good might be done by leading Spiritualists, and the gentlemen who wish to form a society in Pimlico, attending the next meeting, and endeavouring to form a local association to inquire experimentally into the subject of Spiritualism.

ASSYRIAN AND EGYPTIAN SPIRITUALISM.—The Society of Biblical Archaeology, 9, Conduit-street, W., is about to publish many translations of Assyrian texts, including *The Descent of Ishtar into Hades*, *History of the Evil Spirits*, *Incantations for Removing Curses*, *Various Mythological Stories and Invocations*, and *Omens from Terrestrial Objects and Events*. Among the Egyptian translations the society intends to publish are *The Book of the Dead*, *Spells in Lepsius* ("Aelteste Texte"), *Harris Magical Papyrus*, *The Magical Text in the British Museum* (Salt 825. Birch), *Spells in the Tomb of Bek-en-ren-of "Shâ en sensenu"*, *the Book of the Breaths of Life*, *The Lamentations of Isis* (Horrock), and *The Litany of the Sun* (Denk. III. 203).

## ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

R. S., Leamington.—Mr. Fitton, of 34, Walnut-street, Cheetham, Manchester, is able to get you the information you require.

\* Is this accurate? Did not Mrs. Hayden come first? Where was the first seance held in England, and who were present, excluding the seances once held with Kelley by Dr. Dee?—Ed.



**SPIRIT FORMS IN AMERICA.**—Amongst the various physical phenomena that fill the Spiritualist papers, we might mention the manifestations occurring near this city, in the house of Mrs. Juddins. A little girl of fourteen is the medium, and seems full to repletion of the mediumistic aura, or whatever else it may be termed; and, sitting in the cabinet but a moment, brings forth a youthful company of girls and boys who have gone before, of well-known parents hereabouts, and a conversation ensues in no ways different from our common intercourse, playing frequently on instruments, and doing all those things that are so well known in Spiritualist circles. With all my knowledge and thought of Spiritualism through a series of years, and feeling almost a disgust at physical phenomena, and taking for granted that these appearing forms were shadowy, faded, solemn, rather an uninviting evidence of the future life, I was greatly impressed one afternoon, near its close, in a room slightly darkened, but with a cheerful wood-fire throwing its light into the room, to see, in succession, standing near the aperture in the cabinet, three veritable faces, tangible, corporeal, with head and neck fully and roundly developed, each one animated in manner, cheerful, delighted, talking, singing, answering and asking questions—visitors, indeed, from the other realm that any one not obdurate to all sense and reason might gladly commune with. The children were eminently beautiful—say, from childhood to twenty years of age; and, to the sceptical, so far as my testimony goes, I saw their different features, that no collusion was possible, kissed them, and I know that mediumistic or other jugglery was impossible. I was told that, with other parties, at other times, the little medium's mouth had been sealed with a sticking-plaster, so adhesive that, at the close of the *seance*, it took some time to remove it without pain. The family were present, and three other persons besides myself. This group of children, I understand, intend at some future time to show themselves in open day.—G. B. Springfield, Ill. —*Banner of Light*.

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"The medium then passed into what is termed the trance state, and in clear and forcible language, with a readiness of expression and fluency of utterance delivered a discourse on Spiritualism."—*Liverpool Daily Albion*.

"For nearly an hour and a half the orationist, medium, lecturer, or whatever name he chooses to go by, spoke with a fluency, a logical and grammatical correctness, a fitness of language and figure, upon this abstruse subject—Humanity: its Nature and its Needs—which no half-dozen orators in England could hope to equal in their normal condition, without the most laborious preparation beforehand, and the greatest coolness during delivery. . . . He never paused except when a pause was necessary for rhetorical effect!"—*South Wales Press*.

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"He (Mr. Morse) dealt with the various theories set up against Spiritualism, and sometimes he stated his argument so well and became so eloquent, as to provoke rounds of applause from the audience. . . . As the lecture proceeded these demonstrations on the part of the audience became more frequent and prolonged."—*Glasgow Herald*.

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## EVIDENCE THAT SPIRITUALISM DESERVES INVESTIGATION.

SPIRITUALISM deserves investigation because within the last twenty years it has found its way into all the civilised countries on the globe; it has also a literature of thousands of volumes and not a few periodicals.

The London Dialectical Society, Adam-street, Adelphi, under the presidency of Sir John Lubbock, Bart., M.P., appointed a Committee to investigate spiritual phenomena. The Committee was appointed on the 26th January, 1869, as follows:—

"H. G. Atkinson, Esq., F.G.S., G. Wheatley Bennett, Esq.; J. S. Berghem, Esq., C.E.; H. R. Fox Bourne, Esq.; Charles Bradlaugh, Esq.; G. Fenton Cameron, Esq., M.D.; John Chapman, Esq., M.D.; Rev. C. Maurice Davies, D.D.; Charles R. Drysdale, Esq., M.D. D. H. Dyte, Esq., M.R.C.S.; Mrs. D. H. Dyte; James Edmunds, Esq., M.D.; Mrs. Edmunds, James Ganou, Esq.; Grattan Geary, Esq.; Robert Hannah, Esq., F.G.S.; Jenner Gale Hillier, Esq.; Mrs. J. G. Hillier; Henry Jeffery, Esq.; Albert Kisch, Esq., M.R.C.S.; Joseph Maurice, Esq.; Isaac L. Meyers, Esq.; B. M. Moss, Esq.; Robert Quelch, Esq., C.E.; Thomas Reed, Esq.; C. Russell Roberts, Esq., Ph.D.; William Volckman, Esq.; Horace S. Yeomans, Esq."

"Professor Huxley and Mr. George Henry Lewes, to be invited to co-operate. Drs. Chapman and Drysdale and Mr. Fox Bourne declined to sit, and the following names were subsequently added to the Committee:—

"George Cary, Esq., B.A.; Edward W. Cox, Esq., Serjeant-at-law; William B. Gower, Esq.; H. D. Jeucken, Esq., Barrister-at-law; J. H. Levy, Esq.; W. H. Swepston, Esq., Solicitor; Alfred R. Wallace, Esq., F.R.G.S.; Josiah Webber, Esq."

After inquiring into the subject for two years, the Committee issued its report, which, with the evidence, forms a bulky volume, published by Messrs. Longmans. Among other things this Committee reported:—

"1. That sounds of a very varied character, apparently proceeding from articles of furniture, the floor and walls of the room—the vibrations accompanying which sounds are often distinctly perceptible to the touch—occur, without being produced by muscular action or mechanical contrivance.

"2. That movements of heavy bodies take place without mechanical contrivance of any kind, or adequate exertion of muscular force by those present, and frequently without contact or connection with any person.

"3. That these sounds and movements often occur at the time and in the manner asked for by persons present, and by means of a simple code of signals, answer questions and spell out coherent communications.

One of the sub-committees of the Dialectical Society reported:—  
"Your committee studiously avoided the employment of professional or paid mediums. All were members of the committee, persons of social position, of unimpeachable integrity, with no pecuniary object, having nothing to gain by deception, and everything to lose by detection of imposture."

## HOW TO FORM SPIRIT CIRCLES.

INQUIRERS into Spiritualism should begin by forming spirit circles in their own homes, with no Spiritualist or professional medium present. Should no results be obtained on the first occasion, try again with other sitters. One or more persons possessing medial powers without knowing it are to be found in nearly every household.

1. Let the room be of a comfortable temperature, but cool rather than warm—let arrangements be made that nobody shall enter it, and that there shall be no interruption for one hour during the sitting of the circle.

2. Let the circle consist of four, five, or six individuals, about the same number of each sex. Sit round an uncovered wooden table, with all the palms of the hands in contact with its top surface. Whether the hands touch each other or not is usually of no importance. Any table will do, just large enough to conveniently accommodate the sitters. The removal of a hand from the table for a few seconds does no harm, but when one of the sitters breaks the circle by leaving the table it sometimes, but not always, very considerably delays the manifestations.

3. Before the sitting begins, place some pointed lead-pencils and some sheets of clean writing paper on the table, to write down any communications that may be obtained.

4. People who do not like each other should not sit in the same circle, for such a want of harmony tends to prevent manifestations, except with well-developed physical mediums; it is not yet known why. Belief or unbelief has no influence on the manifestations, but an acrid feeling against them is a weakening influence.

5. Before the manifestations begin, it is well to engage in general conversation or in singing, and it is best that neither should be of a frivolous nature. A prayerful, earnest feeling among the members of the circle gives the higher spirits more power to come to the circle, and makes it more difficult for the lower spirits to get near.

6. The first symptom of the invisible power at work is often a feeling like a cool wind sweeping over the hands. The first manifestations will probably be table tilts or raps.

7. When motions of the table or sounds are produced freely, to avoid confusion, let one person only speak, and talk to the table as to an intelligent being. Let him tell the table that three tilts or raps mean "Yes," one means "No," and two mean "Doubtful," and ask whether the arrangement is understood. If three signals be given in answer, then say, "If I speak the letters of the alphabet slowly, will you signal every time I come to the letter you want, and spell us out a message?" Should three signals be given, set to work on the plan proposed, and from this time an intelligent system of communication is established.

8. Afterwards the question should be put, "Are we sitting in the right order to get the best manifestations?" Probably some members of the circle will then be told to change seats with each other, and the signals will be afterwards strengthened. Next ask, "Who is the medium?" When spirits come asserting themselves to be related or known to anybody present, well-chosen questions should be put to test the accuracy of the statements, as spirits out of the body have all the virtues and all the failings of spirits in the body.

9. A powerful physical medium is usually a person of an impulsive, affectionate, and genial nature, and very sensitive to mesmeric influences. The majority of media are ladies.

The best manifestations are obtained when the medium and all the members of the circle are strongly bound together by the affections, and are thoroughly comfortable and happy; the manifestations are born of the spirit, and shrink somewhat from the lower mental influences of earth. Family circles, with no strangers present, are usually the best.

Possibly at the first sitting of a circle symptoms of other forms of mediumship than tilts or raps may make their appearance.

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